

Administrator's Update for 5/6/15
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Last week county staff completed the large-scale task of mapping exotic and invasive flora and mechanical management needs for all the properties managed by our parks and natural resources division. These properties were mapped to help identify efficiencies as we work on meeting the needs of environmental management in the coming years.

A job well done

In April the Parkside Zone Four Neighborhood Watch group organized an award presentation for Charlotte County code compliance officer Rhonda Leonard. Ms. Leonard was presented with an award in recognition for her work as the code compliance officer for Parkside. The event was well attended by her family, colleagues, and many members of the local neighborhood watch as well as Parkside residents. Also recognized for his hard work was Ms. Leonard's law enforcement counterpart Deputy Bill Miller. Multiple speakers at the presentation all spoke highly of the duo's work to enforce the county codes within Parkside. Congratulations to Rhonda Leonard and Deputy Miller for their exemplary public service.

Beach Cleanup

On the last Saturday in April the "Community Beach Cleanup" event was held at Englewood Beach with great success. Over 40 volunteers participated in a strong effort to clean up the beach area. The weather cooperated and after all the hard work the volunteers enjoyed a hotdog lunch with trimmings provided by Winn Dixie of Englewood. Another beach cleanup event will be held in September; call 941.681.3742 for more information.

Harold Avenue gym open

The gym floor renovations are complete and recreational activities have resumed on the newly-resurfaced wooden gym floor. Open drop-in gym times vary throughout the week. Registrations for the Summer Youth Basketball League close May 13. For more information contact the Harold Avenue Recreation Center, 23400 Harold Avenue, Port Charlotte at 941.627.1074.

Earth Day at Vineland

Last week land management staff participated in a community outreach opportunity at Vineland Elementary. The annual Earth Day event marks the fourth year parks and natural resources staff has participated. Every year staff takes this opportunity to reach out to youngsters and teach them the value of our native wildlife, specifically the gopher tortoise. Staff visits each class for about 20 minutes and talks about the gopher tortoise diet, habits, and explains that by protecting the tortoise we also protect many other species dependent on the gopher tortoise and the habitat the tortoise lives in.

Shakespeare

The Shakespeare in the Park event on April 24 at Bayshore Live Oak Park was a huge success—143 adults and 5 children attended, and 24 people stepped up to the mic to recite Shakespearean scenes and sonnets as well as some personal poetry. Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch entertained the audience with a Romeo and Juliet scene, among performances by members from the Port Charlotte High School Shakespeare Club, Peace River Center for Writers, and many others.